CHAPTER IX

THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

A reported incident, for the substantial correctness of which I can vouch personally, throws much light on the condition of Wisconsin dairying during the period prior to the adoption of the factory system. Sometime in the seventies the storekeeper of a Grant County village received a visit from a traveling butter buyer who examined the accumulated supply of summer butter kept in the cellar under the store. He pierced with the trier firkins, jars, rolls, and "pats" of the golden hued if not gilt edged product, sniffing and tasting as he passed from one lot to the next. Finally, after the examination was completed, he said to the merchant: "Well! All I can offer is six and a fourth; now you may take it or leave it."

"No!" shot back the other. "You give me six and a half and take it or leave it."

The buyer, slowly, "Well—I'll take it."

Thus passed, perhaps to the last middleman before it reached the ultimate consumer, the summer's dairy product of a considerable farming neighborhood. The butter had been bought at from 5 to 10 cents and the sale price of the job lot would not have covered the original cost to the storekeeper, who relied for compensation on the profits of the goods sold in exchange for the butter.

The chief obstacle to success in dairying under the old régime, particularly throughout the interior of the state, was the marketing problem. The sole dealer to whom the average farmer, or farmer's wife, resorted was the keeper of the village store, who commonly took butter, as he took eggs, salt pork, lard, and smoked meats, in exchange for groceries and other goods. In most cases buying butter was merely an accommodation to his patrons, and it goes without saying he
was not in position to grade the product strictly or to pay in accordance with the standard of excellence producers maintained. Much, very much, of the butter carried to the stores in the summer season was unfit for human food, and in fact was ultimately sold for grease at a few cents per pound. The good butter, properly packed in clean wooden firkins or in stone jars, could be disposed of at a higher figure. The merchant hoped to recoup himself from the sale of the better product for the losses he inevitably sustained on the worse; but like the instance recited above, he probably in most cases lost money on the aggregate, or would have done so but for the margin of profit taken on exchange goods.

Under that system of marketing, farmers had no encouragement to prepare for dairying by providing a proper dairy house, with desirable equipment for making the best quality butter; little thought was given to the herd, its breeding, housing, winter feeding, pasturing, and general management. In a word, dairying of the kind which depended on the country store for its market lacked every element of sound business and was merely incidental to providing milk and butter for the farm home.

Such dairying had been carried on from the beginnings of agriculture in Wisconsin. Whenever a farmer resolved to make dairying an important feature of his operations, the first step was to find a more satisfactory market than the store. There were several ways of doing this. One was to establish a reputation for fine butter and then sell, at a contract price, directly to private families. The village doctor, lawyer, teacher, and banker—frequently others also—were glad to pay more than the store price in order to make sure of nice, savory butter for their tables. It was no uncommon thing for such patrons to pay 25 or 30 cents per pound cash the year around, for butter which would have brought at the store 10 cents in summer and 20 cents in winter. Under the stimulus of such a market, although it was sharply restricted, farmers here and there began to improve both their dairying practises and their herds.
Another method was to sell no summer butter in summer, but to pack it carefully and keep it under such conditions as to make it marketable in fall, at a fair price, for shipment to city commission houses. To do that required either an exceptionally cool, well ventilated, and clean cellar, or else a "spring house," the latter being preferable. The abundance of beautiful springs of pure cold water in many sections of the state made the stone or wooden spring house, with its deep troughs of flowing water, a not infrequent attribute of Wisconsin farms, though naturally only a small percentage of the whole were thus equipped.

Farmers living in the vicinity of the large cities had special inducements to make their dairying count in the annual balance. For they were able to sell their butter either directly to consumers at a fair contract price, or to middlemen who distributed directly to consumers and could afford to pay well for a first-class article. It is not surprising that the farmers of Kenosha County, almost equidistant from Chicago and Milwaukee, should have been among the leading pioneers in improved dairying, as we find them to have been. For example, W. C. White of the town of Spring Prairie began butter dairying on a considerable scale as early as 1857, changing over to cheese a few years later. Others in the same county were almost equally prominent. The 1860 census presents the names of three Kenosha County farmers who, in the preceding year, made over 2000 pounds of butter apiece. They were W. C. White, Pleasant Prairie, 2800 pounds; Philip Gascoyne of Somers, 3000; and Nicholas Kichtneys (probably Kichtmyer), 2100. The aggregate production of several Kenosha towns was very large, Brighton having 37,708 pounds, Bristol 47,610, Paris 56,256, Pleasant Prairie 68,567, Somers 66,627.

1 Mr. White began making cheese in 1860. See Wisconsin Dairymen’s Association, Report, 1879, 124. Mr. White, it is said, was responsible for the dairymen’s slogan, used so effectively at farmers’ institutes thirty years later: "Speak to a cow as you’d speak to a lady." The writer saw that admirable sentiment painted on a streamer which draped one side of the hall in which the Boscobel farmers’ institute was held February, 1887. The opposite wall was decorated with a streamer of equal length bearing this significant comment on the above: "But don’t speak to a lady as some men speak to a cow."
Salem 47,680, Wheatland 32,188, and Randall 19,183. The heaviest production was in the two lake front towns of Pleasant Prairie and Somers; the lightest in the two westernmost towns, Wheatland and Randall. The aggregate butter production for the 8 towns was 376,620 pounds. Fifteen other Wisconsin counties produced more than that amount of butter. But if the population is taken into account, Kenosha was the largest per capita producer of butter, with one exception, of the 15 counties producing more than 300,000 pounds. The exception was Green County, which produced 34+ pounds per capita as against 27+ pounds for Kenosha. If, however, we limit the competition to rural population strictly, Kenosha’s per capita production is a fraction of a pound higher than Green’s.\(^2\) Contrary to current belief, Kenosha also produced more cheese than did Green County, or any other county.\(^3\) But the most significant fact revealed by the census is that a few farmers were really making a business of dairying.

The counties in which by 1860 dairying was beginning to be carried on intensively were, in addition to the two named above, Racine County, which made approximately 35 pounds per capita of the rural population, and Milwaukee and Walworth, where the per capita production of butter was almost exactly 25 pounds. Each of these counties made a small amount of cheese, Walworth’s quota being the largest of the three.

Intensity of production, however, may mean merely what, for example, it meant in the case of Milwaukee County and less pronouncedly in Green County, namely, that practically all farmers kept a few cows and made butter or cheese, of course wholly under the household system of manufacture. In view of the development which became so marked a few years later, it is interesting to scan the census of 1860 for evidence of a tendency to make dairying an exclusive or principal

\(^2\) Kenosha, with a rural population of 9527, produced 378,966, making the average 38\(^{1/4}\) nearly; Green County’s rural population was 17,660, her aggregate 673,966, or an average of 38\(^{1/6}\).

\(^3\) George DeLong of the town of Somers made 1000 pounds of butter and 6000 pounds of cheese. He had 29 milch cows, while White had 23 and Gascoyne 16.
business, of proportions which would call for special methods
prophetic of the factory system.

We have already noted something of the kind among the
butter makers of Kenosha County. Examples have also been
found in other counties. In Walworth John W. Newton of the
town of Geneva kept 32 cows, making 400 pounds of butter
and 10,300 pounds of cheese. P. A. Price of Rock County,
near Janesville, made from 50 cows 600 pounds of butter and
25,000 pounds of cheese. Milton Barber of Waukesha, from
66 cows, made 10,000 pounds of butter and 10,000 pounds of
cheese. J. V. Robbins of Burke, Dane County, had 115 cows
and made 4000 pounds of butter and 6000 pounds of cheese.
There were in Jefferson County three herds of 21, 30, and 32
cows producing respectively 6000, 3000; and 7000 pounds of
cheese, besides 500, 1000, and 800 pounds butter. One of these
belonged to Asa Favill.4 Fond du Lac also had three distin-
guished herds of 25, 31, and 37 cows credited with both butter
and cheese. In Green County, George Legler of New Glarus
kept 29 cows, making 1000 pounds of butter and 3000 of
cheese; there was a larger herd in the town of York, 36 cows,
credited with 1800 pounds of butter and 6500 pounds of
cheese. Sauk County had one large herd, 41 cows, but the
product divided between butter and cheese was very light.

From the above survey it will be seen that dairying by 1860
was well begun within the limits of the older Wisconsin; that
it tended to become a regular business among a select group
of farmers who were widely scattered mainly in the south-
eastern and southern counties; and that the suggestion of a
factory system of production existed particularly as regards
cheese making. But the rank and file of Wisconsin farmers
were still carrying on in the old way, careless of the character
of the cows, of the way they were kept, of the milk, cream, and
butter, of the method of selling the product.

4 This Favill was an uncle of Stephen Favill of Lake Mills, one of the founders
of the State Dairymen’s Association and a prominent cheese manufacturer for
many years.
It is a far cry from that state of things to the Wisconsin dairying of thirty years later, and the story of building up the dairy interest in that interval provides the leading feature of recent agricultural history.

The forces which operated to bring about the great and fundamental changes so easily recognizable were mainly four: the influence of the New York example; the leadership of New York men; the scientizing and organizing agency of the College of Agriculture; and the whole-hearted cooperation in the practical execution of plans and policies of Swiss, German, Scandinavian, and other farmers of foreign extraction to whom, more than to the native American element, the leaders learned to look for the daily exemplification of good methods and the elimination of bad practices.

A speaker at the convention of the State Dairymen’s Association in 1875 said: “Thirty-five years ago the bulk of the dairy product of America was made in central New York.” That statement involves a certain exaggeration, inasmuch as New England, other middle states, and especially Ohio were producing much butter and some cheese. Yet, there can be no doubt that it was New York’s surplus production upon which, about 1840, the country began to rely for its supply of butter and cheese. Indeed, the demand could not be wholly met from that source, and English cheese continued to be imported to some extent until with the inordinate growth of the New York cheese crop after the introduction of the factory system in 1851 and the contemporary drop in production abroad, due to the cattle plague, the foreign market was opened to American cheese. The New Yorkers who came to Wisconsin in such large numbers from 1837 to 1850 knew something about the beginnings of a more scientific—at least a more business-like—system of dairying; while others, like the late ex-Governor Hoard, who came in the fifties, had had personal contact with a movement for improved agriculture under the dairying impulse which was similar in many respects to what we have

*C. H. Wilder, Wisconsin Dairymen’s Association, Report, 1875, 30.
seen in this state under such leadership as that of Mr. Hoard. The reports of the New York Board of Agriculture, the columns of the agricultural press, especially the *Rural New Yorker*, the lectures of scientific agriculturists, all described with enthusiasm the doings of dairymen in Herkimer, Oneida, Cayuga, Ontario, and other central New York counties. Their herds, chiefly Durhams and Devons, were held up as examples of good breeding, their barns and dairy houses were pictured for the instruction of farmers elsewhere, their methods of manufacture carefully set forth.

Except to those who are unaware that people from the Empire State were so dominant in Wisconsin, there is no mystery in the fact that it was most frequently New York men who headed local movements for the building of cheese factories, for organizing breeders’ associations and other means calculated to develop the dairying interests. A study of the beginnings of a new type of butter and cheese business in the several counties shows the New Yorkers to have been even more exclusively responsible for the results than Vermon ters were for the spread of merino sheep or Morgan horses. In Kenosha W. C. White, in Sheboygan Hiram Smith, in Jefferson Stephen Favill, in Fond du Lac Chester Hazen, in Walworth R. McCutcheon, in Rock C. H. Wilder, in Dane E. P. Sherman, in Waukesha B. M. Hinckley, in Richland John A. Carswell—these are some of the local leaders, and nearly all of them were immigrants to Wisconsin from central New York.\(^6\)

A good specimen of the outworking of the New York influence, through example, is found in the way factory cheese making spread from Bear valley in Richland County to other parts of that county and to Grant County. A group of central New Yorkers was settled in Bear valley in the fifties. Among them were the Carswell brothers, the Beckwith brothers, H. L. Eaton, and others. Another New Yorker, L. G. Thomas of Herkimer County, started what is supposed to have been the first cheese factory in southwestern Wisconsin, near Lone

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\(^6\) Hiram Smith was a Pennsylvanian.
Rock in 1865. Two years later the Carswell factory was begun, the next year the Beckwith factory, the next the Eaton factory, till Bear valley, which once grew wheat and hops, was densely populated with cows. Its farmers were prospering as dairymen, while all around in the neighboring valleys of Richland, Grant, Sauk, and Iowa counties were mortgaged farms whose owners were dubiously contemplating emigration to the West as perhaps the only means of relief. Northern Grant County had no factory prior to the organization in 1881 (possibly it was in 1880) of the Oak Grove factory in Blue River valley. That factory was started by H. Z. Fish of Herkimer County, son of a noted New York dairyman, with another Herkimer man as maker. It could not have been started, however, but for the Bear valley experience, which was brought to the farmers of the Blue River and Fennimore valleys by one of their own number whose brother was a prominent dairyman of Bear valley. That was the influence which induced farmers to subscribe cows enough to make the factory at Oak Grove pay. And the same influence enabled Mr. Fish to start several other factories in addition to that one. In a few years the whole region was supplied with cheese factories, whose combined product was sold by a co-operative board of trade located at Muscoda.

When W. D. Hoard in 1870 began publishing the Jefferson County Union at Lake Mills, there were possibly not more than 45 or 50 cheese factories in Wisconsin. Having come in

8 The local farmer was James A. Black. He was of Virginia stock and a natural leader of men. But the story he told the neighbors, as he drove around the valley with Mr. Fish, was how successfully the factory cheese making system had worked out "over on Bear Creek" as testified by his brother J. Q. A. Black and as he had personally observed conditions there.
9 In the Transactions for 1870, published in 1871, Dr. J. W. Hoyt, secretary of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, caused to be printed tables exhibiting the manufactories of all the counties of Wisconsin. In these are included cheese factories, but unfortunately the number of factories is not stated save sometimes when there is but one. We are given the capital invested, pounds of cheese made during the year, and the value of the products. We find, from that source, that one or more factories existed (presumably in 1870, though one cannot be certain that new creations of 1871 were rigorously excluded) in Dane, Dodge, Fond du
1857 from Madison County, New York, and being in close touch with New York conditions, he was interested in promoting dairying in Jefferson County in accordance with Madison County examples. From news items about dairying progress he passed to editorial comment, and very soon his dairy column contained the most analytical, trenchant, and enlightening discussion of dairy problems. Since the ideas Mr. Hoard advocated were ultimately promulgated by others also and became dominant in the state, the most effectual method of revealing the features of Wisconsin’s dairying development is to give some account of those ideas as Hoard presented them, first in the Jefferson County Union, then in Hoard’s Dairymen, and meantime at hundreds of farmers’ institutes, dairymen’s conventions, and other gatherings of farmers.

Hoard saw that the fundamental problem confronting Wisconsin farmers was the problem of marketing dairy products, especially cheese. Western markets, by 1872, were becoming glutted and it was necessary for Wisconsin manufacturers to break through into the eastern and English markets. This feat, no light one in the days when Wisconsin dairymen were without influence and New York’s competition was so overshadowing, was accomplished through the agency of the Wisconsin Dairymen’s Association, organized in February, 1872, primarily for that purpose.10

Lac, Green Lake, Jefferson, Kenosha, La Crosse, Lafayette, Monroe, Outagamie, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Sheboygan, and Walworth—16 counties. The largest investment in that line of manufacture was in Fond du Lac County, $26,300, where the product amounted to 441,342 pounds valued at $62,819. It seems probable that these figures represent some half dozen factories at least. Other counties which appear to have had several factories each are Green ($11,000 invested), Green Lake ($12,200), Jefferson ($18,000), Kenosha (‘cheese factory’—$7820), Rock ($15,500), Sheboygan ($12,500), and Walworth ($14,500). From this showing, the estimate of 50 factories appears not excessive. It may be too low. Hoard himself in 1873 estimated the number in 1870 at more than 100.

10 The first activity of the Association was to establish market days at Watertown, where Wisconsin manufacturers could meet eastern commission men and learn what the market demanded in the way of quality, uniformity, and mode of packing the product. Chester Hazen of Ladoga, Fond du Lac County, whose factory was perhaps the first one established in the state, 1864, was the first manufacturer of Wisconsin cheese to ship his product to the English market. This he did, it is believed at Mr. Hoard’s suggestion, in 1873.
Then there was the problem of proper curing vaults for summer cheese, in order to preserve the flavor, and Mr. Hoard wrote editorials, visited sub-earth vaults in other states, and finally induced the McCutcheon firm to make the Wisconsin experiment which proved successful. By that and other methods of curing, Wisconsin's summer cheese could be put upon the market under conditions enabling it to compete with cheese produced in cooler summer climates, largely to the benefit of Wisconsin producers. Another problem was to cheapen the cost of winter feed for cows. Mr. Hoard contended during many years that Wisconsin was in a position not only to produce butter and cheese of equal quality with that of New York, but to produce it at a lower cost because land was cheaper, cows were cheaper, and feed was cheaper. But he was never disposed to let well alone, and when he saw in the silo, a French invention, the means of reducing the feed cost he was quite as prompt to seize upon it as were the dairymen in New York. The result is physically apparent to anyone who crosses the state, by rail or vehicle, in any direction, in the uniformity with which farms are equipped with one or more, usually two, silos.

Perhaps the greatest stroke of policy in which Mr. Hoard led was the policy of "breeding sharply for milk" and paying less attention to the beef end of cattle raising. He insisted, with sound logic, many variations of statement, and convincing illustrative stories, that those types of cattle which had been bred longest and most consistently for milk, butter, and cheese were the breeds for dairy farmers to specialize in. Wisconsin farmers had so long regarded the Durham and Devon, especially the former, as the breeds through which to improve their herds, that the prejudice in their favor was hard to uproot. By untiring though by no means wearisome preaching even that feat was accomplished. The "dual purpose cow" was given no chance to fasten herself upon Wisconsin farmers, as she has been foisted by bad leadership upon
the dairymen of some other states. That fact goes far to explain Wisconsin's preëminence in the dairy industry.\footnote{11}

If it is difficult to overrate the significance of leadership like that of Mr. Hoard, it becomes impossible to fix standards for determining the value to Wisconsin's dairy interest of the work done during many years, under distinguished leaders, at the College of Agriculture connected with the University of Wisconsin. That college, the fruit of the Morrill Law of 1862, was not without a struggle established as part of the University. The issue was finally decided in February, 1866, by a farmers' convention called by Dr. J. W. Hoyt, who was editor of the Wisconsin Farmer and secretary of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society. The legislature, which was in session at the time and was partly pledged to establish the college elsewhere, practically accepted the convention's draft (which was Dr. Hoyt's draft) of a new fundamental law for the University, with the Agricultural College as an integral part of the institution.\footnote{12} The result was hailed as a great triumph for scientific agriculture in Wisconsin. However, when it became apparent that the college educated practically no farmers, the attendance of students for some years being negligible, doubts arose in the minds of the farmers themselves, who feared the connection with the University was blighting the prospects of the college. They then initiated a movement to separate the college from the University, and to reëstablish it elsewhere than at Madison. That movement seemed not unlikely to succeed, but in the nick of time Professor William A. Henry, who had been on the ground a few years and was already a prime favorite with the farmers, started in January, 1886, the unique agricultural short course, the instant success of which forestalled further efforts to re-

\footnote{11} Mr. Hoard used to tell a charming story about a swift Morgan cavalry horse that enabled him to distance a detail of rebel troopers who would have captured him save for the animal's fleetness. Then he would ask, "What would have become of Hoard if that horse had been cross-bred with a percheron?" Moral: Breed for a purpose.

\footnote{12} The senate voted to place the college at Ripon, or at least to give the agricultural college land grant to Ripon College. The house voted for the University, and in conference the senate receded.
move the college. Henry's next great step was the inauguration of the winter Dairy School for the training of butter makers and cheese makers. That school, also the first of its kind in America, was opened in the winter of 1887. Within a few years trained young men, properly certificated, were turned out in sufficient numbers to man the new factories, and it then became unnecessary longer to depend on Herkimer County and other New York cheese makers or on their apprentices trained in Wisconsin factories.

The Dairy School, through the young men it graduated, made its anticipated contribution toward putting the dairy industry upon a scientific basis. But it did something more. Its teachers and research scientists themselves made contributions of incalculable value. Professor Stephen Moulton Babcock's milk tester solved a fundamental problem in marketing milk under the factory system with justice to all producers. It put the creamery on a new basis at once and greatly aided the cheese factory also. Professor Henry's *Feeds and Feeding* and Professor Russell's introduction of the bacteriological tests for the purification of herds from infectious diseases, especially tuberculosis, and his practical method of pasteurizing milk were only second in importance to the Babcock test in their influence on scientific dairying.

Through its extension division and its publication department the College of Agriculture became the greatest single agency of dairy education among the farmers, the promoter of organizations helpful to dairying as well as other branches of agriculture, and the clearing-house of experiments conducted on farms and in factories. Farmers' conventions,
formerly held at the capitol under the auspices of the Agricultural Society, now came to be held at the University under college auspices. The farmers' institute, directed by the college, was established in 1886. From that year series of meetings were held in the several counties, which in character were mass meetings of farmers for the discussion of selected problems of agricultural improvement. Scientific men and practical farmers occupied the same platform, with the result that science was more closely controlled by experience and experience definitely guided by science. No other feature in the history of agricultural advancement, save possibly the more recent county agent system, has been so resultful in developing mutual respect and confidence between the farmer and the man of scientific learning.

The above are but a few, although perhaps the chief, ways in which the College of Agriculture has functioned to the benefit of Wisconsin agriculture, particularly dairying. If it were possible to imagine its influence withdrawn, especially in the period beginning with the early eighties, our picture of rural Wisconsin would be sadly altered.

It is a truism of military science that an army cannot be considered complete or fully effective unless the morale of its fighting forces is maintained constantly on a high plane. In Wisconsin, as elsewhere, the execution of dairying plans, policies, and scientific directions was in the hands of the milkers, feeders, and breeders of cows—the everyday, plain, hard working, often tired and discouraged farmers. It is one thing to test out a theory at the experiment station barn or laboratory, quite another to get it applied in farm practise. Some

fact. The milk tester was the only solution for the problem of how to do justice to producers of cream from the standpoint of its butter content. The question of the uniformity of quality in cream was profoundly affected by the introduction of the centrifugal mechanical cream separator. But separated cream still varies a good deal, depending on how it is managed. In the earlier cheese factories all milk was paid for at a given rate per pound or hundredweight. Since some milk had in it two per cent of butter fat and some six per cent, it follows that those contributing the richer milk were discriminated against. By the butter fat test that difficulty is removed and it is now often contended that the milk which is poorer in fat is discriminated against, considering its relative value for cheese.
farmers are unresponsive, some are unintelligent, and a larger number are wanting in the moral purpose to persevere in doing a new thing under instructions, in the hope of a future contingent reward, which after all is the main condition of success. Native Americans, while keen, intelligent, and eager for the profits of every new adventure in agriculture, were by no means all willing to pay the price of success in dairying, which involved steady application to the business every day, week, and month in the year, which interdicted summer vacations, day and night fishing excursions, often even (before the arrival of the auto) daytime visits to not distant friends. Many of them refused to be "tied to a cow." Such farmers made a principal share of the troops of emigrants who moved during the late seventies and the eighties to new wheat areas like the Dakotas, selling their farms to newly arrived German, Scandinavian, or Bohemian immigrants. These new people became interspersed among those of the older American tradition who were willing to change their system of agriculture. Some rented farms, others hired out to Americans, but a goodly proportion bought farms either at once or after a few years’ experience and saving.

In the end they became the guarantors of prosperity in dairying.\textsuperscript{14} For, to begin with, they were accustomed to work, hard and persistently, the long year through. They craved no vacations aside from the usual holidays to which they were accustomed. To them it was no hardship to milk twice a day, feed and tend the cows, and deliver the milk at the factory. All that was "in the day's work." Secondly, in beginning farming under a wholly new environment such as this country presented, they became of necessity pupils in a school of practice, glad to receive helpful suggestions from any source. They developed, as it were, a habit of experimentation which,

\textsuperscript{14} An editorial by Mr. Hoard which was reprinted by the \textit{Wis. Farmer}, Nov. 14, 1874, refers to the economic advantage of dairying and makes the point that the chief objection to it—namely, that it requires attention every day in the year—is really one of the strongest arguments in its favor. It reduces the farming business to the "same law of success as any other." In any actual business one must invest his entire time if he would succeed.
in the period when dairying methods were undergoing revolutionary changes, was highly important. Thirdly, they were generally thrifty, intent first on paying for their farms and then on amassing a competency. These motives made them keen to take advantage of every suggestion the profitableness of which could be foreseen. They were less prompt than the Americans to enter upon ventures which seemed speculative, like paying high prices for purebred breeding stock, but when observation had proved the economy of such expenditures they gradually accepted them as a part of the better farming program.

There is no disposition to minimize the part which native Americans took in carrying out the dairying program, for it goes without saying that thousands have been engaged in that work steadily and successfully. Neither is there any intention to deny to those of foreign birth a goodly share in the leadership, scientific and otherwise, which developed policies and secured their acceptance by farmers generally. The Swiss in Green County are a notable example of a group which adopted a special brand of cheese as the object of their enterprise and pursued its manufacture with extraordinary success. Many individuals among Germans, Scandinavians, and other foreigners performed notable service in the educational phases of the movement. On the whole, however, and by a kind of necessity, the first generation foreigners adapted themselves to plans made by the Americans rather than attempted either to impose or to carry out plans of their own. They were good cooperators and have been the basis of success in hundreds of factory associations. Their children and grandchildren, of course, are simply Americans, quite as likely to be the leaders in given communities as the descendants of the New York dairymen.

The new dairying, which is the product of historical forces whose workings have been clearly discernible for fifty years,
and which owes to a few leaders a debt it is impossible to assess, has placed the state in the forefront of American dairy progress. By reason of it, Wisconsin farmers are in better case than farmers elsewhere over large areas. Even in times of severe depression the agricultural interests of Wisconsin remain strictly solvent, the cows managing always to pay their way. There are nearly 3,000,000 of these cows at the date of writing. Their product, normally, is worth $300,000,000 a year! Among them, not in the character of a bovine aristocracy but rather as a substantial prophecy of the barn-yard democracy of tomorrow, are 80,000 purebred Holsteins, 20,000 purebred Guernseys, 8000 purebred Jerseys, and about 3000 purebred Ayrshires. Space forbids even the attempt to summarize the history of the introduction and spread of the dairy breeds which, with their grades, impart to the pastures of Wisconsin a distinctive character.

Most important of all has been the influence of dairying on the character of the farmer. Business principles, so painfully lacking under the old agriculture, have come to be universally applied in marketing products, and very widely also in the more prosaic features of farm management. The new dairying has made the average farmer something of a scientist, and a good deal of a business man.